

Improving Health Outcomes for People with Asthma

Making a Difference with Education and Outreach



Healthy Communities and Ecosystems

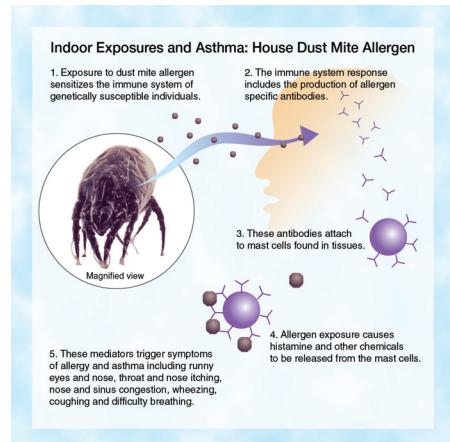
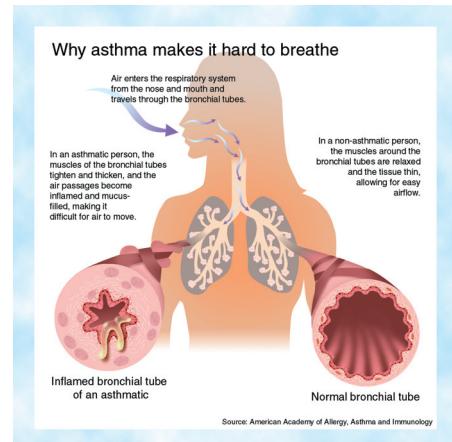
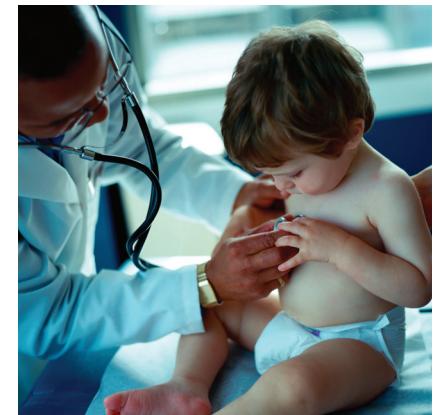
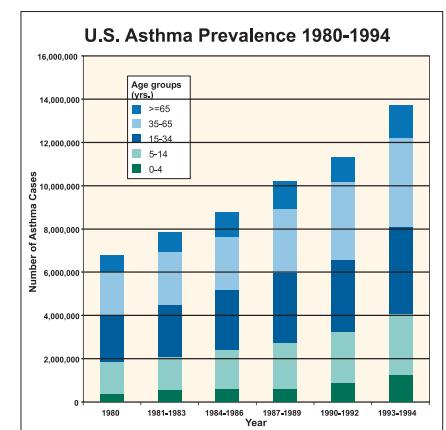
U.S. EPA Indoor Environments Division

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The Indoor Environments Asthma Program is increasing public awareness and action to manage environmental asthma triggers so people with asthma can reduce asthma attacks, emergency room visits, and missed school/work days, and lead fuller lives.

The Problem

- More than 20 million people, including 6 million children, in the U.S. have asthma.
- Asthma accounts for more than 10 million outpatient clinic visits and nearly 2 million emergency department visits each year.
- Between 1980 and 1994, the prevalence of asthma in the U.S. increased 75% overall.
- The number of deaths related to asthma in children nearly tripled between 1979 and 1996.
- Asthma is the most common serious chronic disease of childhood.
- Asthma is the leading cause of school absenteeism from a chronic childhood condition: 14 million school days are missed each year due to asthma.
- Health care and lost productivity due to asthma totaled \$14 billion in 2002.



The Science

- Environmental pollutants are linked to the development and exacerbation of asthma.
- National guidelines for the diagnosis and management of asthma stress the importance of controlling environmental triggers.
- The Asthma Program continues to evaluate scientific evidence supporting the link between environmental exposures and asthma.

The Solution

EPA educates the public through a multi-faceted outreach program that includes a bi-lingual national media campaign, the *Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools* Program, the *Smoke-free Home Pledge* Program, School and Childcare-Based Asthma Education, Health Care Plan and Provider Education, and an In-home Asthma Education Component.

In-Home asthma education is modeled on programs with demonstrated success in improving health outcomes.

- HQ and Region 3 supported the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's Community Asthma Prevention Program to provide in-home environmental interventions:
 - 60% decrease in children's emergency room visits
 - 34% decrease in children's hospitalizations
- Region 2 supported The Clinical Directors Network, Inc.'s in-home intervention program:
 - 23% decrease in unscheduled doctor's visits
 - 69% of children in the program never visited the emergency department over a 10 month period
- Region 8 supported the Denver Health and Hospital Authority's Program that prevented 45 hospitalizations and 42 emergency department visits for the 94 patients in the asthma education program.
- Six additional home-based intervention projects are underway.



"I feel like a fish with no water"

- Jesse, age 5
describing asthma

Environmental asthma trigger education and action leads to better health outcomes for adults and children!

Learn more at www.epa.gov/asthma

Using Science to Make a Difference